

# Action Item Summary

## EPA Technical Meeting #2

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November 13, 2014 : 9:00 am - 11:00 pm

ICF INTERNATIONAL | 630 K Street, Suite 400, Sacramento CA 95814

### I. Introductions:

Attendees\*: Cassandra Enos (DWR), Ken Bogdan (DWR), Parviz Nader (DWR), Derek Hilts (USFWS), Cathy Marcinkevage (NMFS), Susie Barrett (USFWS), Matt Nobriga (USFWS), Tim Vendlinski (EPA), Stephanie Skophammer (EPA), Chandra Chilmakuri (CH2M-Hill), Ben Giudice (RBI), Adam Smith (ICF), Michelle Banonis (USBR), Steve Centerwall (ICF)

### II. Presentation by CH2 and RBI –

- Preliminary results of sensitivity analyses indicate that many exceedances of salinity standards were caused by one of three factors:
  - Modeling artifacts (daily patterning of Delta inflows in DSM2)
  - Proposed shift in WQCP compliance point from Emmaton to Threemile Slough
  - Other modeling assumptions (location of restoration areas, operation of Suisun Marsh salinity control gate, and timing of operable barrier operations)

### III. Discussion of EPA Concerns

Topic 1: Was any additional modeling and/or analysis conducted by the lead agencies?

#### Action Items:

- Preliminary results of sensitivity analyses were presented at this meeting and will inform the following revisions to the Supplemental EIS:
  - Develop explanation of modeling artifacts and discussion of operational flexibility in meeting standards
  - Add information about restoration siting and design and potential to avoid effects on salinity (potentially as mitigation measure)
  - Based on these results, change conclusions to less than significant/not adverse for salinity effects at Emmaton, San Andreas Landing, Old River at Tracy Road Bridge, and in Suisun Marsh
  - Add context to discussion of Prisoners Point objective re: intent of standard (striped bass spawning) and potential effects on covered species if this HORB operations or additional south Delta exports were pursued to eliminate these

exceedances.

- Correct calculations for chloride effects (150 mg/L WQO) limitations in modeling of the conference years and add discussion of restoration siting to avoid impact
- Continue evaluating chloride degradation impact (250 mg/L WQO) – CH and RBI will continue to evaluate modeling results and provide update to EPA.

Topic 2: EPA concern that modeling shows persistent violations of water quality standards in the Delta related to salinity and chloride.

Areas of Agreement:

- Need to base conclusions on persistent, substantive, long-term violations. One violation in 16 years is not “persistent”.

Action Items: (N/A – covered by previous bullet)

Topic 3: EPA concern that project would worsen water quality for users who divert water directly from the Delta, including increasing bromide around the North Bay Aqueduct intake at Barker Sl.

Action Items:

- Continue investigating whether restoration area siting design could resolve and/or whether increases are modeling artifact.

Topic 4: EPA concerned that DEIS does not report compliance with flow-related D-1641 objectives.

Areas of Agreement:

- Compliance with flow objective built into Calsim model.

Action Item:

- EPA will discuss internally whether it is enough to affirm compliance explicitly or whether compliance needs to be demonstrated in the EIS.

Topic 5: EPA concerned that DEIS does not explain why higher outflows result in higher salinity concentrations for Alternative 8 relative to Alternative 7.

Action Item:

- ICF team will add clarification in the document or provide a response to comment explaining why long-term average numbers do not show monthly variation related to outflows.

Topic 6: EPA is concerned about how the Rio Vista minimum flows will be met and how the State Board’s current process for revisions to the WQCP has been integrated into the BDCP.

Areas of Agreement:

- The relationship of the SWRCB WQCP to the BDCP needs to be better defined.
- The scope of the SWRCB process is broader than the scope of BDCP with different purposes/goals.

Action Item: An additional description of the two processes (WQCP revisions and BDCP) will be added to the Supplemental EIS.

Topic 7: What mitigation measures are available to mitigate to avoid impacts?

Action Items: (N/A – covered by previous bullet)

Topic 8: Will all WQ objectives be evaluated?

Action Items:

- The flow-related questions in Table 3 of D-1641 were discussed previously. EPA will clarify whether there are other questions.

#### IV. Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Meeting to be held on 11/24 to discuss contaminants (selenium and mercury).

\*Note: Erin Foresman was not in attendance. However, a follow-up conference call with Chandra, Ben, Steve, Cassandra, Stephanie, and Erin was held on Nov 19<sup>th</sup>.